United Nations E/2011/86

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 April 2011

Original: English

**Substantive session of 2011**
Geneva, 4-29 July 2011
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council**

## Functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits

### Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report highlights the progress made in improving the resident coordinator system. It shows that the organizations of the United Nations system have endeavoured to strengthen the role of the resident coordinators by: (a) institutionalizing their lead role; (b) establishing frameworks for cooperation in the United Nations country team; (c) creating incentives for collaboration; and (d) establishing clear lines of accountability. More, however, needs to be done. In particular, the management and accountability system, which is aimed at responding to mandates arising from the triennial comprehensive policy reviews of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, remains a work in progress. There is room for improvement of the instruments that empower the Resident Coordinator. While the use of innovative funding mechanisms such as multi-donor trust funds is important, the United Nations system should accelerate the implementation of other innovative instruments and mechanisms to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of its contribution to programme countries. Additional funding in support of system-wide coherence creates an incentive for cooperation at the country level, but that funding may dry up in the future. The present report submits a number of recommendations for the consideration of the Economic and Social Council, including acceleration of the implementation of reform and improvement of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other instruments in support of the resident coordinator system.

* E/2011/100.

11-31021 (E) 270511

Please recycle

# Contents


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Introduction | 3 |
| II. | Institutional context and systemic challenges | 4 |
| III. | Support provided by the resident coordinator system to national ownership and leadership in the coordination of all external assistance | 7 |
| IV. | Role of the resident coordinator system in ensuring coordination between the contribution of the United Nations system and national priorities | 8 |
| V. | Effectiveness of coordination through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework | 17 |
| VI. | Strengthening the financial and human resources of the resident coordinator system | 19 |
| VII. | Issues to be addressed in preparation for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system to be undertaken in 2012 | 23 |

# I. Introduction

1. The resident coordinator system is the main mechanism of the United Nations development system for coordinating its support to national development as well as recovery and transition in programme countries. It brings together the capacities of the United Nations system in supporting national efforts. It also assists countries in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

2. The effective functioning of the resident coordinator system is at the core of system-wide coordination and coherence at the country level. The triennial comprehensive policy reviews of operational activities for development of the United Nations system carried out by the General Assembly and the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in follow-up have established key policy orientations for the governance and functioning of the resident coordinator system. A common thread running through those decisions is the principle of national ownership and leadership, along with the central role of the Resident Coordinator in country-level coordination and the importance of ensuring that the resident coordinator system is owned by the United Nations system as a whole, inclusive of and accountable to all.

3. Over the past few years, the resident coordinator system has undergone several changes, with a view to providing more effective and coordinated support for a country's development. The adoption by the United Nations Development Group[1] in 2008 of the management and accountability system for the United Nations development system, including the functional firewall for the resident coordinator system, has given major impetus to this reform. A review of the management and accountability system is currently being conducted under the auspices of the Group.

4. The present report aims to shed light on systemic challenges and opportunities in maximizing the support provided through the resident coordinator system to programme countries. It assesses the performance of the resident coordinator system against the benchmarks formulated during the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review and in the follow-up resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council (resolutions 2008/2, 2009/1 and 2010/22). It also highlights issues that might be addressed during the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to be carried out by the General Assembly in 2012, and could assist the Council in guiding the preparations for the review.

5. Ten resident coordinators were interviewed and a number of United Nations agencies consulted and surveyed to aid in the preparation of the report. These are referred to in the report as they revealed important issues of system-wide concern. A number of annual reports of resident coordinators were also analysed.

6. The present report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Secretary-General on the resident coordinator system prepared in the past three years, and with the other reports submitted to the Council in connection with the operational activities segment of its present session.

[1] The United Nations Development Group comprises 32 of the United Nations funds, programmes, agencies, departments and offices that play a role in development.

# II. Institutional context and systemic challenges

7. The resident coordinator system is multi-tiered, involving both governmental and intergovernmental oversight and coordination mechanisms at the headquarters, regional and country levels. It is present in over 130 countries, with resident coordinators and United Nations country teams serving a system of 32 organizations and entities, and the Bretton Woods institutions, each with its own mandate, governance structure and procedures. The resident coordinator system performs multiple functions and serves diverse needs within a complex institutional structure, all of which pose a major challenge to its effective functioning.

## Resident Coordinator

8. The Resident Coordinator represents and acts as liaison between the Secretary-General and United Nations country team as a whole, including non-resident agencies, and the government. The Resident Coordinator leads in the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and takes the final decision on its strategic focus. The Resident Coordinator also contributes to mobilizing the resource for the Framework. He or she coordinates the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Framework, and reports on its results, notably to the government.

9. The Resident Coordinator wears multiple hats, serving as the designated representative of the Secretary-General in normal situations and, in about 80 per cent of countries, as the Designated Official for security. The Resident Coordinator is usually designated as the Humanitarian Coordinator in countries in the midst of a humanitarian crisis (currently, 29 countries) and as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in integrated presences.[2] In certain locations, the Resident Coordinator also acts as director of the United Nations information centre. The Resident Coordinator is also the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

10. Despite these many functions, the Resident Coordinator is not vested with the responsibility to commit financial resources. He or she has no direct control over human, technical and financial resources, except those in his or her office. Furthermore, there are no direct supervisory lines between the individual members of the United Nations country team and the Resident Coordinator. In spite of these limitations, the Resident Coordinator is accountable to, among others, the Government, the United Nations country team and to UNDP (i.e., as Resident Representative).

## United Nations country team

11. The members of a United Nations country team are accountable for the results agreed upon within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the joint workplans of the team. United Nations country teams differ substantially in size and composition, depending on, inter alia, the policies and development

[2] Refers to any context in which the United Nations has a multidimensional peacekeeping operation or political mission in addition to a country team.

situation of the host country and the field presence and activities of the agencies. Some country teams have between 18 and 23 resident members but most have between 12 and 20 and about one third have up to 12 resident members. Most non-resident agencies use the Resident Coordinator's office and UNDP for local representation and support.

12. The resident coordinators define and pursue the agenda of the United Nations country team through a consensual process in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Each of the organizations, agencies, funds and programmes represented in the country team has its own governance and accountability framework and highly specialized mandate. The human, financial and technical resources available to them also differ, with each operating on business models[3] that best suit their mandates. The country representatives and/or directors of the agencies are directly accountable to their own organizations. The country offices and programme activities of the agencies are funded from their own resources (regular budget and extrabudgetary) and/or host government contributions. These differences come into play at the country level, particularly when United Nations country teams help countries to deal with such cross-cutting or large-scale issues as climate change, food security and the global economic crisis.

## Regional teams of the United Nations Development Group and regional coordination mechanisms

13. The regional teams of the United Nations Development Group consist not only of the members of the former Executive Committee[4] but also specialized agencies and departments of the United Nations Secretariat. Notably with the management and accountability system, their focus has shifted to providing strategic guidance to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams in relation to the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. Their core functions include provision of technical support to resident coordinators and country teams; quality assurance of United Nations Development Assistance Framework/United Nations programmes; performance management through the regional coordinator/country team performance appraisal system; and troubleshooting in challenging country situations.

14. The regional coordination mechanisms, chaired by the regional commissions, coordinate the work of the regional offices of the organizations of the United Nations system on strategic policy and programmatic issues of regional priority and concern.

15. Regional coordination mechanisms and the regional teams of the United Nations Development Group are expected to support and strengthen each other's work through two-way interaction. The regional coordination mechanism focus on policy, normative support and analytical work at the regional and subregional levels, while the regional teams have a more operational focus, providing coherent and timely support to United Nations country teams.

---

[3] Operating modalities in relation to resource mobilization, and operational and accountability tools and instruments, including levels of delegated authority.

[4] United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund and World Food Programme.

16. Resident coordinators and United Nations country teams can call on the regional teams and regional coordination mechanisms for support. The role and accountability of the regional directors and representatives of the various United Nations organizations, however, vary significantly: some exercise oversight of country operations, while others represent centres of expertise or logistics. Generally, they do not yet have the level of authority, expertise and resources necessary to take on the new tasks delegated to them by the management and accountability system. This issue is being addressed by the United Nations Development Group but the level of support that the Resident Coordinator can obtain from the regional teams remains uneven.

## Global governance of the resident coordinator system

17. Member States, through the comprehensive policy reviews carried out by the General Assembly, establish the overarching principles for the functioning and management of the resident coordinator system. The Economic and Social Council monitors the implementation of those principles and provides guidance, while the resident coordinators report to host country governments on the results achieved in relation to the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

18. The resident coordinator system is managed by UNDP on behalf of the United Nations system, with guidance from all organizations, and is accountable to all through the United Nations Development Group. The secretariat of the Group, the Development Operations Coordination Office, provides funding and training to the resident coordinators. As a result of a restructuring triggered by the adoption of the management and accountability system, that Office will focus on policy and strategic support functions,[5] with the operational tasks shifted to the regional teams.

19. Given the many roles of the resident coordinators in supporting programme countries, a range of members of the United Nations Development Group and other organizations and entities (e.g., Department of Safety and Security, Department of Political Affairs) issue requests and guidance to resident coordinators. The burden of reconciling these different agendas rests entirely on the Resident Coordinator.

20. Within this complex system, an increasing number of expectations are placed on the Resident Coordinator. Programme countries are more frequently requesting the resident coordinators to coordinate policy support, or requesting normative advice; similar requests are made by non-resident agencies. The strategic priorities of the United Nations Development Group for the biennium 2010-2011 stressed support for country teams to engage in policy and programme dialogue, technical advice and capacity development.

[5] This includes providing support to the country teams in implementing the strategic priorities established by the Development Group for 2010-2011 and the management and accountability system.

# III. Support provided by the resident coordinator system to national ownership and leadership in the coordination of external assistance

21. In carrying out the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review, the General Assembly, in resolution 62/208, stressed that national governments have the primary responsibility for their countries' development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance.

22. By the same resolution, the General Assembly invited the United Nations development system to enhance its participation, ex officio, in current and new aid modalities and coordination mechanisms, at the request of the programme country. Aid coordination is exercised notably by means of the consultative group, round-table and ad hoc meetings between governments and donors, sectoral working groups, or meetings among donors .

23. Governments often seek the support of United Nations country teams in the management and coordination of external resource flows. At their request, United Nations country teams have supported the preparation of national development plans, joint assistance strategies and sector-wide approaches. According to the resident coordinators interviewed for the purpose of the present report, the resident coordinators, on behalf of the United Nations country teams, usually participate in one way or another in national aid coordination mechanisms.

24. Capacity-building is the centrepiece of United Nations support for aid coordination. A key focus is on strengthening the capacities of central and local governments to lead and account for progress in regard to national development priorities. In 2010, 80 United Nations country teams provided support to develop the capacity of State and non-State actors to participate in aid modalities, aid management and coordination, and evaluation. In 62 countries, country teams helped to strengthen national capacities to develop and use aid information management systems to bolster national aid coordination, increase aid transparency and accountability, and maximize the contribution of aid to development.

25. United Nations country teams increasingly harmonize their technical and financial support with other partners through programme-based approaches, particularly at the sectoral level. Emphasis is placed on strengthening national leadership with a view to accelerating progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In 2010, 55 United Nations country teams reported their participation in 154 programme-based approaches, primarily in the health, education and agricultural sectors. The support that the teams provide to national partners is also aimed at ensuring that sectoral programmes are accessible to the poorest and most marginalized populations.

26. The role of the resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams in supporting aid coordination varies with the development status of the host country and the characteristics of the donor community.

27. In countries which are highly dependent on aid, such as the least developed countries, the resident coordinator system plays an important role in assisting governments, upon request, to build capacities for the management, coordination and monitoring of aid and for ensuring transparency in aid flows and management. Resident coordinators frequently participate in aid coordination bodies on behalf of

the United Nations country team. Members of the country team are represented in committees dealing with sectoral issues, irrespective of the size of the actual United Nations contribution.

28. In middle-income countries, where the donor community is smaller, United Nations country teams help the government to coordinate effectively the activities of external partners at the sectoral level and to build the monitoring and evaluation capacities of corresponding local institutions, for example, line ministries. The resident coordinators assist such countries in accessing all of the technical resources of the United Nations system, including those of non-resident agencies.

29. In countries in the midst of a humanitarian crisis, in conflict or in post-crisis or post-conflict situations, the coordination role of the Resident Coordinator extends also to the interventions of actors from outside the United Nations system, for example, in the development of a response plan and the coordination of humanitarian operations. Integrated presences enable the United Nations to develop a more integrated approach to the challenges at hand. Yet, it is important that those functioning as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian Coordinator and/or Resident Coordinator acknowledge the different imperatives of peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and development assistance, so that aid coordination mechanisms can be structured accordingly.

30. Overall, the resident coordinator system plays an important role in helping the programme country to coordinate external aid. The challenges are many, as aligning international assistance with national development priorities hinges on consensus at the international level.

## IV. Role of the resident coordinator system in ensuring coordination between the contribution of the United Nations system and national priorities

31. During the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review, recognition was accorded to the central role of resident coordinators in the coordination of United Nations operational activities, with the ultimate goal of improving support to programme countries. The system-wide ownership of the resident coordinator system and the need for participatory, collegial and accountable functioning were emphasized. To achieve those objectives, measures have been introduced over the past few years to address gaps in four areas, namely, the leadership role of the Resident Coordinator, frameworks for cooperation, incentives for collaboration, and accountability.

### Institutionalization of the leadership role of the Resident Coordinator

32. The resident coordinators do not have a direct supervisory relationship with the heads of the agencies participating in the United Nations country teams. Interviews with resident coordinators showed that the effectiveness of coordination efforts relies largely on the leadership skills of the individual resident coordinators and their personal relations with the members of the country teams. There has been an effort to strengthen the leadership role of the resident coordinators through

instruments that help to develop a shared team vision and that reward effective coordination efforts. Success stories show that leadership by the resident coordinators is best exercised when shared with country team members by giving them a leading role in thematic groups.

33. The adoption of the management and accountability system marked the institutional acknowledgement of the leadership role of the Resident Coordinator and followed up the mandates arising from the 2004 and 2007 triennial comprehensive policy reviews.[6] The management and accountability system endorses the vision that the Resident Coordinator be an excellent team leader who can represent the whole United Nations system effectively. It equips the resident coordinators with important responsibilities in managing multi-donor trust funds and joint programmes. It expects country representatives of all agencies to report to the Resident Coordinator on matters related to the workings of the country team and the implementation of the agency's country programme and strategy.

34. The United Nations Development Group for the implementation of the management and accountability system anchored the role of the Resident Coordinator, notably: (a) leading the United Nations country team in the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and, if consensus cannot be reached, taking the final decision on the strategic focus and allocation of resources; (b) leading the country team in the preparation of an annual workplan based on the results of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other joint plans and initiatives; (c) leading the team in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the results of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; and (d) serving as the primary interlocutor of the team with the Head of State of Government.[7] Agencies are in the process of adjusting the job descriptions of their resident representatives to reflect these roles.

35. It has been suggested that the leadership roles of resident coordinators and the teamwork within the United Nations country team are stronger in situations of transition from relief to development. A factor may be that more resources are available in such situations, including for coordination. The Resident Coordinator also has greater authority over funding instruments, such as pooled funds. Of 39 multi-donor trust funds, 17 focus on humanitarian assistance, recovery or peacebuilding. This has enhanced the authority of the Resident Coordinator in facilitating the development of a common vision and improving the coordination of operational work. Some evaluations and reviews of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks show, however, that coordination needs further strengthening.

36. Consultations with resident coordinators and some studies suggest that their leadership in regard to development issues is strengthened by their functions relating to political, humanitarian and staff security issues.

37. For example, in a special political mission or peacekeeping operation, the Resident Coordinator acting also as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-

[6] The 2004 review called for the development of a comprehensive accountability framework for resident coordinators. The 2007 review underscored that the functioning of the resident coordinator system should be participatory, collegial and accountable.

[7] This arrangement does not affect the responsibility of the country director or representative of each agency to maintain direct lines of authority and communication with senior officials as part of the agency's mandated activities.

General is widely recognized by the United Nations country team as the team leader in addressing political issues and liaising with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Resident Coordinator plays a key role in leading joint, country team-wide peacebuilding strategies and priority plans, and in the implementation of the World Bank, United Nations and European Commission partnership framework on post-crisis and crisis situations. In non-mission settings, the Resident Coordinator leads United Nations engagement and analysis in situations of rising tension or political complexity. The Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator also plays a key role in emergency preparedness and wider disaster risk reduction in respect of both inter-agency preparedness and longer-term programming, such as the integration of disaster risk reduction into common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. As the Designated Official for security, and in accordance with new security policies in the United Nations security management system, the Resident Coordinator has greater scope in decision-making and greater authority in exigent circumstances as concerns options relating to security issues.

38. While these various functions give added importance to the role of the Resident Coordinator, they entail major responsibilities and call for a wide range of competencies and frequent arbitration among multiple objectives and actions, with the ultimate objective of maximizing United Nations support to the country.

## Creation of frameworks for United Nations country teams to work together with strategic focus, inclusiveness and coherence and results

39. The value added of the resident coordinator system rests, inter alia, with the ability of the system to form a strategic vision that guides the individual and joint intervention of members of United Nations country teams in response to national priorities. Over the past decade, efforts to strengthen the system have focused on creating frameworks that will enable members of country teams to plan strategically and work jointly in contributing to national development priorities.

*United Nations Development Assistance Framework*

40. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework is the strategic framework for the collective response of the United Nations system to national development priorities. It defines the outcomes jointly pursued by the United Nations country team in line with national priorities. It is also a resource mobilization framework which indicates how each team member will contribute to the outcomes, as well as the estimated financial resources required overall and from each agency.

41. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework is not an operational document. Agencies continue to operationalize their contribution to the Framework through their own country programme documents, project documents and workplans. Also, there are agency-specific programmes not included in the Framework.

42. In 2010, 44 countries prepared new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and, for 2011, 28 new Frameworks are envisaged. So far, 16 of the roll-

out countries have chosen to use the tools and policies[8] developed on the basis of the pilot approach known as "Delivering as One".

43. The formulation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework is an inclusive process which involves a range of national actors and all members of the United Nations country team in building a common strategic vision. The role of the Resident Coordinator is to secure full national ownership of the process and products and to ensure, together with national authorities and the country team, the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

44. A majority of the resident coordinators interviewed valued the United Nations Development Assistance Framework as the only mandatory framework that brings together the United Nations country team. The process for its preparation was, however, viewed as cumbersome by many team members. The guidance introduced by the United Nations Development Group in 2010 for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework aims to simplify the process and give more flexibility to the country team, for example, enabling it to draw on government analysis in preparing the Framework.

*United Nations Development Assistance Framework action plan*

45. In addition to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, members of the country teams prepare strategy and planning documents within the accountability frameworks of their own organizations. The funds and programmes develop country programme documents, which are operationalized by country programme action plans and annual workplans. Other organizations may use project or programme documents[9] that are increasingly tied to corporate strategic frameworks. There is, however, no formal mechanism to ensure the linkages between the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and agency-specific documents. The Resident Coordinator does not play a role in the development of agency-specific documents.

46. The guidance provided in 2010 for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework introduced the option to develop the Framework action plan as a single operational document and possible substitute for all agency-specific operational documents of the United Nations system. The action plan puts the Framework into operation. It focuses on resource requirements and indicative resource commitments through a common budgetary framework. It also outlines how the agencies should organize themselves and work with governmental and other national partners to deliver the results. The Resident Coordinator is expected to exercise the overall oversight in the development of the Framework action plan, which establishes a clear link between the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the programmes of the agencies of the United Nations system. Early experience has shown that the action plan could represent quite a heavy process.

[8] United Nations Development Assistance Framework action plan, including a common budgetary framework, and common country programming documents.

[9] Not all agencies use workplans; project documents have a similar level of detail, with annualized actions, targets and resources.

*Common country programme document*

47. The first common country programme document (United Republic of Tanzania) was submitted to the executive boards in 2011. The document consolidates the country programme documents of the funds and programmes into a single document in one format. It outlines the results, partner contributions and indicative resources of relevant United Nations organizations, in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or equivalent strategy document. The common country programme document extracts information on the operational activities of funds and programmes from the United Nations development assistance strategy which covers programme information of all funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

48. The intergovernmental approval process of the common country programme document remains the same as for agency-specific country programme documents, with the common document also submitted to each executive board for approval.

49. Although the role of the Resident Coordinator in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework action plan is not formally specified, the common country programme document increases the prospect of the Resident Coordinator leading in the implementation of the Framework, thereby enhancing cooperation and avoiding duplication. The suitability of including in the common document the specialized agencies, many of which work by means of projects, is being assessed.

*Joint programmes*

50. A joint programme is a set of activities which involves two or more United Nations organizations and national and subnational partners; a joint programme has a common workplan and related budget. The Resident Coordinator co-chairs the steering committee on multi-donor trust funds, which have become an important source of funding for joint programmes[10] using the pass-through modality.

51. Joint programmes provide the framework for two or more United Nations organizations to work together for common results. They are particularly useful when organizations deal with cross-sectoral issues, and where they have common national partners or work in the same geographical area. An essential assumption of joint programmes, however, is that organizations participating in the United Nations Development Group provide the start-up human and financial resources required to initiate the preparatory activities for a joint programme, which is not the case for specialized agencies and some other United Nations entities.

## Creation of incentives for United Nations country teams

52. The United Nations Development Group has worked to increase incentives for inter-agency work through performance appraisal instruments, as well as the recruitment and capacity development of resident coordinators.

53. Resident coordinators have no authority over the resources available to the members of the United Nations country teams, mainly because they are allocated

[10] There are currently 22 such programmes; see Multi-donor Trust Fund Office Gateway (http://mdtf.undp.org/).

within the specific resource mobilization framework of the agency or organization concerned.

54. Additional funding has had a significant impact in triggering advances in system-wide coherence. Over the past few years, a number of new funding instruments have been established in support of coherent approaches at the country level, notably the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund, established with the support of Spain, as well as the One Fund and the Expanded Funding Window at the country level. The funding arrangements all placed the resident coordinators at the centre of decision-making and created a new incentive for the members of the country team to work together. As of April 2011, the overall commitments to the 39 multi-donor trust funds administered by UNDP reached nearly $5 billion. In addition, the one budgetary framework established in countries adopting the Delivering as One approach catalyses joint mobilization and tracking of resources.

55. Both the Delivering as One Fund and the Expanded Funding Window were established to support the Delivering as One approach, operating on the principle of joint programming. In 2010, financial support from the Delivering as One Fund was being provided in 17 countries, including the 8 countries in which the Delivering as One approach was tested. The total commitments of the four donors to the Expanded Funding Window (Norway, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Netherlands) amounted to $253 million in 2010. In total, 17 countries have benefited from the Expanded Funding Window.

56. Country-led evaluations suggest that in countries in which a One United Nations fund is established, the strategic role of the Resident Coordinator has been enhanced, both in guiding the use of resources in accordance with the agreed programme and in leading the joint mobilization of resources.

57. The Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund was established in 2007 by Spain to accelerate the achievement of key Millennium Development Goals and related development objectives. Its portfolio consisted of $618 million, allocated to 128 programmes in 49 countries. By 2010, all of the funds committed had been disbursed.

58. The novelty of the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund was that the resident coordinator mechanism was used for its coordination and management, and the modalities of joint programmes were used for its implementation. The Fund stimulated inclusiveness through the participation of most United Nations Development Group agencies in joint programming and joint programmes, but in some cases finding the right balance between inclusiveness and a strategic focus remains a challenge.

59. The Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund is coming to a close and the resources for the Delivering as One Fund are by no means assured. One of the effects of these funding modalities, namely that of triggering closer cooperation within the United Nations country team to help countries address cross-cutting issues under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, is thus disappearing.

## Establishment of clear accountability

*Ensuring accountability to governments through improved reporting*

60. One of the decisions arising from the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review was that the Resident Coordinator, supported by the United Nations country team, should report to national authorities on the progress made in relation to the results agreed in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The country teams report to national authorities through dedicated annual review reports and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework progress report, which covers the entire cycle of the Framework.

61. Reporting to national authorities is being improved with the adoption by the United Nations Development Group in 2010 of the revised guidelines for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and a standard operational format for reporting on its results. The guidelines envision that the government and United Nations country team conduct an annual review of the Framework.

62. The annual review and the preparation of the Framework progress report are placed under strong national ownership and leadership. United Nations country teams are to consult national authorities on their expectations on how the progress report will be used and how to enhance mutual responsibility between the United Nations and the government. The report is made available to a range of stakeholders, both within national authorities and more widely, and will become the single point of reference for determining what has been achieved in relation to the Framework outcomes and the United Nations contribution, thereby improving transparency.

*Ensuring accountability within the United Nations system*

63. The management and accountability system aims to provide a clear framework for the management by UNDP of the resident coordinator system on behalf of the United Nations system and to establish a mechanism of mutual accountability between the Resident Coordinator and the members of the United Nations country team. The management and accountability system also outlines the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders in achieving the vision of the resident coordinator system.

*Overall progress*

64. A survey of resident coordinators conducted by UNDP in 2010 showed that the management and accountability system is being implemented by most United Nations country teams. The majority of resident coordinators (63 per cent) indicated that they had received sufficient information on the system during 2009; 63 per cent of UNICEF country offices reported that the management and accountability system was functioning reasonably well or very well.

65. Nearly 85 per cent of resident coordinators felt empowered and recognized fully or partially because of the implementation of the management and accountability system. Roughly one half of them provided performance assessments of country team members, as envisaged in the system; however, only 32 per cent did so as part of a formal process institutionalized by the respective agencies.

66. The management and accountability system nonetheless remains work in progress; 10 per cent of the United Nations country teams which responded to the survey indicated that they had not yet implemented it. Approximately 70 per cent of the resident coordinators access the technical resources of agencies to a certain degree, while 26 per cent of them are of the view that country team members are not yet reporting to them on team-related work. Of the 37 per cent of UNICEF country offices reporting that the management and accountability system was not working well, most cited the firewall as the main factor.

67. In addition to the management and accountability system, the framework of accountability for the United Nations security management system also establishes mutual accountability in the United Nations country team in relation to staff security issues. The Designated Official is responsible for ensuring that the goal of the United Nations security management system is met in the country or area under his or her responsibility. The heads of agency in the country are responsible for supporting the Designated Official in discharging his or her mandate in relation to the safety and security of all United Nations personnel, premises and assets.

*Mutual accountability through mutual performance appraisal*

68. Action is being taken to enhance mutual accountability between the Resident Coordinator and members of the United Nations country team through a mutual appraisal of performance. This requires that the Resident Coordinator and country team agree on the results to be achieved as a team within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework within a certain time frame, and mutually assess their performance and the achievement of results.

69. First, the performance of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator/Designated Official and the country team is appraised by the United Nations Development Group's regional teams. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination provide the necessary feedback.

70. Second, the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator/Designated Official and the members of the country team carry out mutual assessment. In addition, the country team as a whole is assessed by the Resident Coordinator and team members across five key attributes[11] of high-performance teams. Following this assessment, coaching is provided to ensure progress and improvement.

71. In implementing the management and accountability system, the United Nations Development Group also approved four measures to reinforce the accountability of country team members for the results agreed by the team: (a) agencies should revise the job description of resident members of the country team to reflect the role of the Resident Coordinator in strategically positioning the United Nations in each country; (b) agencies should provide information to the Resident Coordinator on resource mobilization and the programme implementation performance of any United Nations Development Assistance Framework/Delivering as One programme elements led by the agency; (c) the Resident Coordinator should provide an assessment of the performance of country team members in relation to the team as a whole as formal input to the agency performance approval process;

[11] Acknowledging others, clear common goals, positive culture, transparent group dynamics and ambition.

and (d) agencies should incorporate the procedures for the assessment of team results in their own assessment systems. A few agencies have fully implemented these steps and others are preparing for their full implementation.

72. The appraisal approach has gained support from regional teams, resident coordinators and country teams. Regional teams have, however, requested improvement of the process which is perceived as time-consuming. There is need for more systematic follow-up of appraisals in order to address performance gaps. Assessment of the Humanitarian Coordinator is also important.

*Ensuring system-wide ownership through the functional firewall*

73. In addition to their other responsibilities, resident coordinators continue to serve as resident representatives of UNDP. The need to clearly delineate these two sets of responsibilities has been consistently underscored by Member States and the organizations of the United Nations system. The General Assembly, in resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive review of operational activities, recalled the mandate of UNDP, within the existing programming arrangement, to appoint country directors to run its core activities, including fund-raising, so to assure the resident coordinators were fully available for their tasks. The management and accountability system introduced the concept of a functional firewall and clarified the functions of the Resident Coordinator and of the Resident Representative.

74. The functional firewall is supported by the appointment of a UNDP country director and, in other cases, empowerment of the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative. By January 2011, 51 Country Director posts had been established. The Country Director is expected to run the core activities of the UNDP country office, including fund-raising, especially in countries with large country teams or in situations of complex emergency. This allows the Resident Coordinator to focus on his or her coordination functions. According to a survey of resident coordinators carried out by UNDP in 2010, UNDP is now represented in 93 per cent of country team meetings by the Country Director or the Deputy Resident Representative.

75. Preliminary feedback collected by UNICEF from various levels within the United Nations resident coordinator system suggests that the separation of functions is effective in about two thirds of countries. Interviews with resident coordinators also suggest that when a country director has been appointed, the responsibilities of the Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative are better delineated. Under this circumstance, resident coordinators in general do not engage in resource mobilization for UNDP and are perceived as neutral in decision-making on resource allocation. Nevertheless, the Resident Coordinator is still called upon to deal with UNDP-specific business by the government as the highest authority in the UNDP country office. He or she continues to sign off on UNDP documents.

76. According to interviews, some resident coordinators consider that their role as UNDP resident representatives supports them in exercising their resident coordinator function in the light of their higher visibility to the wide range of ministries involved in development. There is some concern that the resident coordinator function may be less attractive and less influential without it.

77. The functional firewall between the roles of the Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative depends on ensuring:

(a) The Resident Coordinator is accountable to all members in the United Nations country team, while continuing to be accountable to UNDP management as Resident Representative;

(b) The separation of the dual role of Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative in different country situations, including countries in which the offices are small and where it has proved challenging;

(c) The dual role of Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative is made clear to external partners;

(d) All United Nations resident coordinators are familiar with the United Nations system so that they can play a full role in the programming and resource allocation and mobilization processes for the entire United Nations system.[12]

78. Although the efforts to establish the functional firewall are widely recognized, there remain concerns about their efficacy in ensuring the Resident Coordinator's neutrality and impartiality. Some are of the view that appointing a country director or empowering a deputy resident representative, while an improvement, cannot fully address the perceived conflict of interest which arises, inter alia, from the real or perceived overlap of mandates between UNDP and agencies. There are proposals to consider other mechanisms, for example, rotating the resident coordinator function among agencies.

# V. Effectiveness of coordination through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework[13]

79. The role of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework in improving the provision of support to programme countries is important for assessing the benefits of the resident coordinator system. The benefits of the Framework may be judged by its impact on, among others, national ownership, strategic focus, coherence, inclusiveness and results. A review of 10 evaluations and midterm reviews of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks conducted for the present report revealed important findings.

## National ownership

80. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework was generally judged to have had a positive effect on national ownership of United Nations assistance. There is, however, a tendency for governments to have stronger ownership of sectoral programmes or even entire agency country programmes than they do of the Framework. It has also been observed that government priorities are sometimes underfunded compared to issues with more visibility (e.g., HIV/AIDS).

[12] This is being pursued through an induction process which includes a briefing on the various agencies.

[13] The present section is based on the preliminary results of a study of the costs and benefits of coordination, conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in March 2011. A review of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks being conducted by the United Nations Development Group may provide more comprehensive analysis.

## Coherence

81. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework, along with common country assessments and joint programming, was generally seen to have contributed to reducing duplication. Areas most prone to coherent action include HIV/AIDS, monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals and initiatives undertaken at a decentralized level. Duplication and fragmentation of United Nations activities was, however, frequently mentioned. It is clear that there is scope to do much more.

82. Themes or thematic clusters were considered important tools for supporting coherence in both the planning and the implementation phases.

83. Inconsistencies between the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the results chains of country programmes were commonly observed. The guidelines for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework introduced in 2010 by the United Nations Development Group and the related optional action plan were aimed at addressing this issue.

## Strategic focus

84. Some midterm reviews of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks pinpointed achievements that would not have come about in their absence, such as collaboration on a census (in two instances) and on the Millennium Development Goals, a poverty reduction strategy paper and HIV/AIDS. Yet others suggested that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework had made no difference and that United Nations organizations plan programmes and projects in isolation.

85. Evaluations suggest various remedies. One is to have adequately resourced programme coordination groups. Others include a sharper focus (implying fewer outcomes) and more joint programming, and many called for more rigorous, results-based monitoring systems.

## Inclusiveness

86. Resident coordinators report that they endeavour to associate non-resident agencies with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework's preparatory process. Some non-resident agencies initiate such cooperation. Nonetheless, some smaller agencies and non-resident agencies consider themselves overstretched in responding to such demands. Their participation in the formulation of the Framework is often hindered by the usually short deadlines entailed in the process.

87. Overall, more work is required to harmonize arrangements for agency implementation. Some midterm reviews of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks showed that there was clear interest in developing a single operational document which contained common outcomes and which was based on a clear division of labour among United Nations agencies.

# VI. Strengthening the financial and human resources of the resident coordinator system

## Funding of the resident coordinator system

*Increased 2010 funding paralleling the United Nations Development Assistance Framework roll-out and strengthening the United Nations Development Group regional teams*

88. UNDP continues to be the primary source of funding for the management of the resident coordinator system, with most coming from its core budget and used to support country-level coordination activities. The combined cost of the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative positions and the offices of the resident coordinators was $73 million in 2010 (a 4.7 per cent increase), which was fully funded from UNDP core resources. In addition, UNDP provided $766,000 in support of the eight Delivering as One pilot countries,[14] while $0.5 million was allocated to support non-resident agency focal points in several countries,[15] through a pilot project implemented in the biennium 2008-2010. In 2010, $17 million was provided by the Development Operations Coordination Office to support the offices of resident coordinators.

89. Non-core funding is an important supplement to the core funding provided by UNDP. In 2010, the United Nations country coordination fund expended US$ 33 million, of which approximately 46 per cent was allocated to support United Nations country teams.

90. The financial support provided to the regional teams increased significantly to $1.2 million in 2010, a 28 per cent increase over 2009, in conjunction with the strengthening of their responsibilities. This is in contrast with funding for the operation of the Development Operations Coordination Office in 2010, which decreased to $1.7 million, a 14 per cent decrease over 2009.

91. It is a widely held view that, with moderate investment, coordination has produced concrete results at the country level in terms of less duplication and greater synergy, contributing to enhanced development effectiveness. There is potential to achieve more. In this sense, it can be argued that the resources currently devoted to United Nations coordination may not be sufficient.

[14] No additional funding was provided to countries that had voluntarily adopted the Delivering as One approach.

[15] During the biennium 2008-2010, UNDP provided a total of $1.7 million.

**Funding of the resident coordinator system by and through the United Nations Development Programme and the Development Operations Coordination Office of the United Nations Development Group, 2005-2009**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

| *Funding and allocation* | *2005* | *2006* | *2007* | *2008* | *2009* | *2010* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. United Nations Development Programme (regular funds)** | | | | | | |
| 1. Operational support: | | | | | | |
| (a) Core cost of Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator's office[a] | 52 132 | 53 579 | 61 431 | 66 766 | 70 030 | 73 338 |
| (b) Support to non-resident agencies[b] | — | — | — | 556 | 578 | 574 |
| (c) Support to United Nations Development Group regional teams[b] | — | — | — | 687 | 912 | 1 176 |
| (d) Support to Delivering as One pilot countries[b] | — | — | — | 314 | 1 003 | 766 |
| (e) Support to Development Operations Coordination Office/headquarters[c] | 1 372 | 1 604 | 1 717 | 1 765 | 1 994 | 1 723 |
| 2. Support to offices of resident coordinators (allocated and monitored through the Development Operations Coordination Office)[d] | 14 264 | 13 193 | 12 687 | 15 635 | 16 796 | 16 970 |
| **Total A** | **67 768** | **68 376** | **75 835** | **85 723** | **91 313** | **94 547** |
| **Increase over previous year (percentage)** | | **0.89** | **9.84** | **11.53** | **6.12** | **3.42** |
| **B. UNDP and Development Operations Coordination Office (funds raised from donors through the United Nations country coordination fund)** | | | | | | |
| 1. Support to Development Operations Coordination Office/headquarters, United Nations System Staff College[e] | 6 961 | 7 191 | 9 445 | 10 181 | 11 264 | 14 912 |
| 2. Support to United Nations Development Group regional teams | — | — | 200 | 517 | 255 | 1 066 |
| 3. Support to United Nations country teams[f] | — | 2 063 | 3 498 | 9 217 | 10 630 | 9 105 |
| 4. Additional support to post-crisis United Nations country teams[f] | 2 119 | 3 531 | 3 325 | 4 440 | 4 894 | 5 937 |
| 5. Support to Delivering as One pilot countries and countries that have voluntarily adopted that approach[f] | — | — | — | 1 250 | 1 200 | 2 000 |
| **Total B** | **9 080** | **12 785** | **16 468** | **25 605** | **28 243** | **33 020** |
| **Increase over previous year (percentage)** | | **28.98** | **22.36** | **35.68** | **9.34** | **16.91** |
| **Total resident coordinator system support from/through UNDP** | **76 848** | **81 161** | **92 303** | **111 328** | **119 556** | **127 567** |
| **Percentage donor funding (B) to total resident coordinator system support** | **11.82** | **15.75** | **17.84** | **23.00** | **23.62** | **25.88** |

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to table)

*Source*: UNDP and Development Operations Coordination Office of the United Nations Development Group.

[a] Includes the aggregated cost of UNDP support to the coordination function at the country office level (including share of salary of the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and operational and administrative support costs) and represents 27 per cent of the cost of a UNDP country office, based on a workload survey carried out in 2009.

[b] Prior to 2008, support to non-resident organizations, regional teams and Delivering as One pilot countries (where relevant) was aggregated and included in the core costs of the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and the Resident Coordinator's office. This item includes funding for 14 national coordination analysts and six regional coordination specialists assigned to United Nations Development Group regional teams.

[c] Total management allocations (i.e., cost of posts plus general operating expenditures).

[d] In accordance with UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board decision 95/23, UNDP has allocated support to resident coordinators from its programming arrangements. This provides seed money to strengthen country-level coordination and allows resident coordinators to respond quickly to opportunities for system-wide collaboration in response to national priorities, including recovery and transition.

[e] Prior to 2008, support to regional teams (item B.2), support to United Nations country teams (item B.3) and support to Delivering as One pilot countries (item B.5), where relevant, was aggregated and included in the support to the Development Operations Coordination Office/headquarters (item B.1).

[f] Allocated to offices of resident coordinators.

*Burden-sharing remains limited*

92. Pursuant to the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review, the General Assembly called upon the United Nations system to provide further financial, technical and organizational support for the resident coordinator system, and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the members of the United Nations Development Group, to ensure that resident coordinators have the necessary resources to fulfil their role effectively (resolution 62/208). The support that members of the United Nations Development Group can give to the functioning of the resident coordinator system depends on their policies and funding models. Most members of United Nations country teams contribute by providing dedicated staff time to support and lead thematic groups.

93. Agencies have reported an increase in requests by resident coordinators to the United Nations country teams for funding of activities and enhancing the capacities of the resident coordinators' offices. This may point to inadequate resourcing.

94. While members of the country team contribute staff time to the work of the Resident Coordinator's office, interviews with resident coordinators suggest that they generally do not contribute to the administrative costs of the office. Cost-sharing arrangements exist for joint programming activities (e.g., assessments of and retreats for the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, joint advocacy and communication). More broadly, agencies contribute to inter-agency work in support of the resident coordinator system. While cost-sharing is important, there is a consensus that the Resident Coordinator's office should remain lean and rely on agency capacities.

95. Resident coordinators are better supported when dealing with political, humanitarian and security issues. In these cases, they receive support from the

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Political Affairs in the form of missions and in some cases additional staff for the Resident Coordinator's office, for example, dedicated safety and security personnel in the field and senior advisers at the Department of Safety and Security at Headquarters.

*Measuring the cost of the resident coordinator system is challenging*

96. The costs of the resident coordinator system have several components. Some costs are reported in the budgets of UNDP and the Development Operations Coordination Office, while others are indirect, incurred by the members of United Nations country teams at the country level and additional to the support provided by the regional and/or headquarters offices of each of the United Nations Development Group agencies. UNDP conducts a regular (every two years) survey of coordination costs, according to which about 27 per cent of UNDP country office costs funded from the regular resources of the UNDP biennial support budget is spent on coordination of United Nations development activities. A recent preliminary study of the costs and benefits of coordination[16] suggests that coordination costs amount to $237.5 million annually and accounted for approximately 3 per cent of United Nations programmable resources in 2009.[17]

97. These costs would need to be set against the benefits derived from the resident coordinator system, many of which have been outlined above. Neither the costs nor the benefits can be easily determined, owing to the inherent difficulties of assessing and quantifying their dimensions and in the absence of harmonized accounting, budgeting and reporting standards throughout the United Nations system.

## Recruitment and career development of resident coordinators

98. Recent years have seen an incremental increase in the number of resident coordinators appointed from agencies other than UNDP. In 2010, 36 per cent were from other agencies, compared to around 27 per cent in 2005.[18] For some, the experience of serving as Resident Coordinator has improved their career prospects in the organization of origin. In most cases, however, the return of former resident coordinators to their organization at a level equivalent to that of Resident Coordinator is not guaranteed. At the same time, the increase in the number of resident coordinators appointed from agencies other than UNDP has implications for the career development of UNDP staff, as resident coordinators also serve as UNDP resident representatives.

99. There has been improvement in gender balance and geographical balance among resident coordinators, although more is needed. At the end of 2010, 35 per cent of resident coordinators were female, compared to 23 per cent in 2000. Over

[16] Study conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in March 2011.

[17] Includes (a) the costs of UNDP and the Development Operations Coordination Office in relation to the resident coordinator system, (b) the costs for the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and (c) the estimated costs for agencies other than UNDP at the country, headquarters and regional levels, including rough costing of time spent by staff on activities of the United Nations Development Group, the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management.

[18] Does not include those recruited from outside the United Nations system.

the same period, the number of resident coordinators from developing countries increased from 37 per cent to 52 per cent.

100. According to an assessment carried out by the United Nations Development Group in 2009, there has been a notable decrease in the number of applicants for Resident Coordinator posts,[19] and consequently fewer nominations for Resident Coordinator vacancies. There are several reasons for the decrease. First, the level of authority given to the resident coordinators is perceived as inadequate by some potential candidates given the post's complex and heavy responsibilities and levels of accountability. Second, the heavy demands of the job (including the Resident Coordinator's multiple roles) are not matched with sufficient support.

101. The United Nations Development Group has developed an action plan to help attract, develop and retain candidates for the resident coordinator pool, including a set of short-term, medium-term and longer-term targets. One of the steps to be taken is to make the assessment of potential candidates more rigorous through the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre.

102. United Nations system-wide ownership of the resident coordinator system requires the full involvement of all member organizations, including the United Nations Secretariat, in the design and implementation of resident coordinator training and briefing programmes. Since 2007, resident coordinator induction training has included briefings at the headquarters of Europe-based agencies, with their financial support. The induction programme is being changed from an agency-based to a thematic approach, in which agencies contribute to themes of their concern. The benefits of this approach in familiarizing resident coordinators with the whole United Nations system should be assessed.

# VII. Issues to be addressed in preparation for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system to be undertaken in 2012

## Achievements

103. The growing complexity and cross-cutting nature of the challenges confronting developing countries, from the impact of the global economic crisis to sustainable development, require more than ever coherence in United Nations system support.

104. In 2010, a range of tools and instruments were made available to the resident coordinator system for implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on improving the coherence and effectiveness of United Nations operational activities.

105. The most important was the implementation of the management and accountability system, the concomitant gradual empowerment of the Resident Coordinator and the enhancement of system-wide ownership of the resident coordinator system. The lead role of the Resident Coordinator in the development

[19] The pool comprises candidates who have passed the assessment to become resident coordinators but are not yet appointed.

and implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and within the United Nations country team has been confirmed. The reorganization of the architecture of the resident coordinator system, as well as the focus of the United Nations system as a whole on the strategic priorities agreed by the United Nations Development Group for 2010-2011, provided the resident coordinator system with a clear strategic vision inspired by the triennial comprehensive policy review. The management and accountability system also further streamlined the overall management and oversight of the resident coordinator system.

106. The impact of most of these measures needs to be kept under review during 2011-2012 when a large number of new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks are to be developed.

## Risks and challenges

107. Despite many advances, there remain systemic constraints to the role of the Resident Coordinator. Without authority over an enhanced level of programme resources, the Resident Coordinator's lead role and capacity in influencing the content of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks is weakened and remains closely defined by the mandates of the members of the country teams. Some of these issues can only be resolved by looking at governance issues at the level of the United Nations system and are beyond the scope of the members of the United Nations Development Group.

108. Other critical factors in empowering resident coordinators have been joint programming and joint programmes, spurred on by the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund, and multi-donor trust funds, such as the Expanded Funding Window and the One United Nations country funds. These resources are instrumental in particular for engaging the non-resident agencies in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process. The future of the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund and the Expanded Funding Window is, however, uncertain, as is continued funding for the One United Nations fund. There is the risk that resident coordinators will have access to non-earmarked resources only within the context of consolidated appeals in support of humanitarian assistance.

109. In the current situation, the success of the resident coordinators continues to depend on their personal competencies and their credibility in leading the United Nations country team impartially and collegially.

110. There is a need to review and strengthen the link between agency-specific instruments, such as country programme documents and country programme actions plans, and the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework and Framework action plan, where they exist, and to ensure appropriate sequencing in order to strengthen coherence and avoid duplication and overlap. The impact of innovative instruments developed under the Delivering as One approach (e.g., one programme, one fund, one budgetary framework, United Nations Development Assistance Plan and common country programme document) will be assessed as part of the independent evaluation of that approach.

111. With the functional firewall introduced in the management accountability system, an effort is being made to address potential issues such as the conflict of

interest between the functions of United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative. The effectiveness of the firewall depends on the size of the United Nations country team, its integration of the concept of mutual accountability and the magnitude of United Nations activities in a country.[20] It also hinges on the extent of the engagement of the Resident Coordinator on system-wide issues compared to agency-specific issues, and his or her personal attributes in engaging and empowering others. Of critical importance is whether the Resident Coordinator is trusted as a collegial, neutral and accountable leader of the team, fully knowledgeable about the United Nations system.

112. The increasing ownership of the United Nations resident coordinator system brings with it growing expectations and thus a growing workload for the Resident Coordinator and his or her office. This shift in roles and responsibilities has been acknowledged in recent tools and instruments elaborated by the United Nations Development Group, which envisage an enhanced role for the Resident Coordinator within the United Nations country team. It is not reflected, however, in the resources made available to the resident coordinators, which have remained essentially unchanged, except in the case of the Delivering as One pilot countries.

113. The Resident Coordinator's role has expanded from that of coordinator of United Nations operational activities for development to a range of other areas, including leadership responsibilities in an integrated mission under the direction of a special representative of the Secretary-General. Such political and humanitarian functions reinforce the leadership of the Resident Coordinator in coordinating development-oriented activities.

## Recommendations

114. The Economic and Social Council may wish to:

(a) Encourage the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations Development Group, in preparing the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to identify ways in which to maximize the impact of recent reorganizations of the resident coordinator system on the coherence and effectiveness of the support provided by the United Nations system to member States, building on the independent evaluation;

(b) Urge the members of the United Nations Development Group to implement the recent reform measures to ensure ownership of the resident coordinator system and the related mutual accountability between resident coordinators and United Nations country teams envisaged in the management and accountability system;

(c) Encourage the Secretary-General, in preparing the quadrennial review, to conduct a review of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in order to assess their alignment with national priorities and their focus on Millennium Development Goal results and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Framework process, building on the work of the United Nations Development Group;

[20] Having a country director as part of a country team with very small operations may not be cost-effective.

(d) Encourage organizations of the United Nations system to work with the Resident Coordinator to improve the linkages between United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and agency-specific programming and project documents, taking into consideration their specialized mandates and business models;

(e) Invite the United Nations Development Group to further enhance the instruments and tools which facilitate efficient, effective and inclusive United Nations support to programme countries, such as joint programming;

(f) Invite the United Nations Development Group to ensure that coordination and programming instruments, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, are flexible enough to respond to various country situations, notably in middle-income countries, net contributing countries and smaller countries, based on the principles of national ownership and leadership;

(g) Invite the Secretary-General, in preparing the quadrennial review, to analyse the role of the existing funding modalities, including multi-donor trust funds, in helping programme countries to deal with cross-cutting development issues and in supporting the central role of the Resident Coordinator in country-level coordination, and to make recommendations to further improve these modalities;

(h) Invite the United Nations Development Group to conduct a review of existing funding modalities in support of the resident coordinator system, including those used by the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and come up with actionable proposals to improve the availability of funds to the Resident Coordinator, to be reported by the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council;

(i) Encourage the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group to review regulations related to human resources and inter-agency mobility of staff in order to ensure that they do not put at a disadvantage the careers of staff members of organizations of the United Nations system who serve as resident coordinators, and to support staff members who apply for resident coordinator assessment.